

# MAJORITY TO OYSTER BILL

Mr. S. W. Mathews Presents a Dissenting View on the Oyster Report.

## OPPOSE LEASING THE ROCKS

Accomac Member Demands the Maintenance of the Baylor Survey—Points Out Hardships.

Now that Mr. S. Wilkins Mathews, of Accomac, has made the minority report of the Joint Committee on Oyster Legislation, and Mr. E. C. Jordan, of the majority, has introduced a bill carrying into effect the recommendations embraced in the majority report of that committee, the great oyster war in the General Assembly is about to begin. The Jordan bill was referred to the Committee on the Chesapeake and Its Tributaries, and it is expected that the oystermen who oppose the measure will appear here in force and ask hearings on the questions involved. In that event the committee can hardly refuse such hearings, and it may be that they will consume considerable time before the committee can report the bill back to the House.

Meanwhile the Joint committee yet, nor has the Mathews report reached that body. It is probable that Mr. Mathews and the opponents of the majority view will prepare and offer a bill which will be considered by the committee at the same time the Jordan bill is under consideration.

The Jordan bill proposes to break the Baylor survey and lease out to the highest bidder large areas of oyster rocks and shoals declared by the joint committee's report to be barren or depleted. It is based directly upon and embodies the recommendations made in the report of the special joint committee.

The minority report filed by Mr. Mathews is considered a strong presentation of that view of the subject, and will be vigorously supported in both houses. Here is the full text of the report drawn by Mr. Mathews, and the minority view of the oyster industry of the Eastern Shore and has for years represented Accomac in the House:

To the General Assembly of Virginia: The undersigned, a member of the joint special committee, appointed by an act approved April 13d, 1902, to submit the following minority report: He is obliged to dissent from the conclusion reached in the first section of the report of the joint committee, with reference to the number of acres of barren or depleted oyster rocks in the State. It is true that there are 25,000 acres of natural rock included in the Baylor Geodetic Survey, but it was impossible for your committee to determine what proportion of these rocks are barren or depleted. We examined not to exceed ten per cent. of the entire area. Our information as to the ten per cent was derived from the conversations with those who desired these grounds as it was from any actual examination on the part of your committee. It is true that we were engaged seven days in endeavoring to perform the work assigned to your committee, but we do not think we were engaged more than thirty-five days in the actual examination of the rocks. Our first trip of about fifteen days was consumed in making a general reconnaissance of the area, making any attempt at an actual examination of the same.

Some of the rocks were examined after the closed season, and after the tongs had been on the same and taken quantities of oysters therefrom. Yet, unfortunately, the examination was made on oysters on these rocks, and an unusually good strike of spat, which in twelve months develops into seed oysters. We do not think we were engaged more than thirty-five days in the actual examination of the rocks. Our first trip of about fifteen days was consumed in making a general reconnaissance of the area, making any attempt at an actual examination of the same.

Each rock is separate and distinct, and its condition varies in almost every case. Because one is depleted, it does not follow that the next one will be barren. It is impossible for your committee to make an intelligent statement of the condition of a single rock not actually examined. It is true that the majority of the rocks were selected because our attention was called to the same by planters who wished to lease them. They accompanied us in making the examination. Those rocks called depleted by the majority are barren or depleted, because now you have over 500,000 barren acres open to assignment, but because they would be assigned to the planters who would be assigned, individually, these seed oysters, which are now obtained by thousands of people.

It would be impossible to select any one rock, the condition of which could be taken as a criterion by which to judge of the barrenness or non-productiveness of other rocks. The statement of the majority of the committee, that the depleted rocks are ten per cent. of the area within the Baylor Survey is depleted and exhausted as not to exceed itself within 3 years, is incorrect. Because the depleted rocks are not so partial as to render any such conclusion purely speculation, and because the commission does not make the statement that so large a proportion is depleted and exhausted as to not exceed itself within 3 years, it is entirely inconsistent with such a conclusion.

I concur in section 3 with the majority, in holding that the barren or depleted rocks are valuable for planting purposes, but they are not naturally barren or depleted. Seed oysters and do annually reseed themselves. I do admit that not all of the 25,000 acres marked as public ground in the Baylor Survey is natural rock. There is considerable acreage contained therein that is not natural rock and, if it is, it is valuable or profitable for planting purposes.

This area is not desired, and would not be rented by planters, and never would be leased by them. This number of acres not profitable for planting purposes is scattered over the waters of the Commonwealth in the shape of sand bars and mud flats. It is absolutely necessary to have considerable space between the ground assigned to planters and the natural rock. If you have not considerable space, it is too easy unless you surround the ground with police protection, to pass from assigned ground to the natural rock.

You can depricate and, before the police authorities can reach you, get back on your own ground with no expenditure of taking any oysters, except what you may equally as well be supposed to come from your own private grounds. Your

# DR. SHOOPS RHEUMATIC CURE COSTS NOTHING IF FAILS.

Any honest person who suffers from Rheumatism is welcome to this offer. For years I searched everywhere to find a specific for Rheumatism. For nearly 20 years I worked to this end. At last, in Germany, my search was rewarded. I found a costly chemical which I have now reduced to a simple, harmless, and effective Rheumatic Cure. I do not mean that Dr. Shoop's Rheumatic Cure can turn bony joints into flesh again. That is impossible. But it will drive from the blood the poison that causes pain and swelling, and then that is the end of Rheumatism. I know as well that it will furnish for a full month my Rheumatic Cure on trial. I cannot cure all cases within a month. It would be unreasonable to expect that. But most cases will yield within 30 days. This trial treatment will convince you that Dr. Shoop's Rheumatic Cure is a power against Rheumatism—a potent force against the most terrible of ailments.

My offer is made to convince you of my faith. My faith is based on the outcome of experience—of actual knowledge. I KNOW what I can do. And I know this as well that I will furnish my remedy on trial. Simply write me a postal for my book on Rheumatism. I will then arrange with a druggist in your vicinity so that you can have a bottle of Dr. Shoop's Rheumatic Cure to make the test. You may take it a full month on trial. If it succeeds the cost to you is \$5.50. If it fails the loss is mine and mine alone. It will be sent entirely to you. I mean that exactly. If you say the trial is not satisfactory I don't expect a penny from you.

I have no samples. Any mere sample that can affect chronic Rheumatism must be drugged to the verge of danger. I use no such drugs for it is dangerous to take them. You must get the disease out of the blood. My remedy does that even in the most difficult, obstinate cases. It has cured the oldest cases that I ever met, and in all of my experience, in all of my 2,000 tests, I never found another remedy that would cure chronic cases in so short a time.

Write me and I will send you the book. Try my remedy for a month, for it can't harm you anyway. If it fails the loss is mine.

Address Dr. Shoop, Box 268, Racine, Wis.

Mild cases not chronic are often cured by one or two bottles. At all druggists.

committee's attention was particularly called to this fact.

I cannot concur in section 4 of said report. At present there are many thousands of individuals in the State of Virginia who are making a living and paying taxes on the basis of the Baylor Survey. If the State is to take these oysters and selling them to planters. If they are depleted of this privilege, the oystermen will be deprived of the valuable rocks designated by the majority of your committee as depleted rocks are rented to the planters, the result will be that these thousands of individuals must leave the State, and thus deprive the State of a large amount of revenue.

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great industry. The oyster situation is critical to this extent, and only to this extent.

I cannot concur in the conclusion of the majority of your committee, recommending the enactment of a law by this General Assembly providing for the leasing of barren, exhausted, and depleted bottoms, because, as I have heretofore stated in this report, there are no barren, exhausted or depleted bottoms, in the judgment of the public, or in the judgment of the Baylor Survey, designating the natural rocks, beds and shoals that the State can lease or rent out without depriving the net revenues now obtained from this source, and directly injuring many thousands of her citizens.

In my judgment any interference with the Baylor Survey will greatly jeopardize the future development of the oyster industry. That survey was made in 1892 at a very great cost to the State of Virginia, yet such cost was incurred for the purpose of finally settling a question, so that the people of the State, thereby causing much agitation and litigation. Finally the General Assembly ordered that this survey be made in order to settle the question of the leasing of the bottoms might not be in doubt as to the oystermen upon which they expended their money. The State required that these oystermen should be paid for the use of the clerk's office of the various counties of this Commonwealth. Existing conditions have now become adjusted to the State, and the oystermen have been gradually increasing in the last few years under wise legislation, will continue to increase.

I would therefore earnestly recommend: 1. That the party or parties to whom are entrusted the management of the oyster industry should be paid a salary sufficiently large to enable him or them to give his or their entire time to the same. 2. That penalties for the violation of particular statutes be made more severe, by providing confinement in the county jail in place of the light fines now prescribed in the oyster laws.

I believe if these recommendations are enacted into laws, and the public assured that the oyster industry will be protected and that those who have acquired rights thereunder will be protected and required to respect the rights of others, many acres of oyster grounds now rented out, and therefore now giving to the State no revenues, will be gradually leased and made productive, and will be a source of revenue to the State.

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# NO CHANGE IS POSSIBLE

Panama Will Not Go Back to Bogota Government Under Any Consideration.

## CONCESSIONS ARE OFFERED

People of Colombia Determined to Recapture the Isthmus, Even at Great Sacrifice.

(By Associated Press.)

COLON, Nov. 17.—The Panamanian Commission, composed of Senors Arias, Morales and Arosemena, which left Panama yesterday to meet the peace commission from the department of Bolivar, boarded the Mayflower to-day, and held a short conference with the Colombians, who only represent the department of Bolivar, and the Governor of that